

Focus on People

Compiled by *Heike Hasenauer*

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MILITARY intelligence and the movie business may seem worlds apart, but for **2LT Monroe Mann** they're different sides of the same coin.

A member of the New York Army National Guard and a recent graduate of the Intelligence Officer Basic Course at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., Mann is also a fledgling actor whose most recent film, "Swimfan," was a major summer hit.

"Sure, acting and the Army might not seem like complimentary careers," Mann said, "but they're both equally important to me. One is an artistic outlet, and the other is a way I can give something back to the nation."

A native of Port Chester, N.Y., Mann

acted in high school and briefly attended the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City. He went on to college in Switzerland, and after completing degrees in economics and French decided to pursue acting.

"I graduated from college in 1999, and headed back to New York," he said. "Things went well, but a few months into the process I started feeling funny about just being an actor, like something was missing. And then I saw 'Saving Private Ryan.'"

The powerful film about a group of soldiers on a hazardous World War II mission touched a nerve, Mann said, and after doing some research he decided that duty in the National Guard would allow him to both serve the nation and pursue his theatrical career.

PEOPLE who know her call her the poster girl for the Army Reserve, but 20-year-old **SPC Sandra Mercado** isn't letting the publicity go to her head.

A year after being featured in the "An Army of One" advertising campaign, the broadcast journalist with the 222nd Broadcast Operations Detachment in Bell, Calif., said the Reserve is exceeding her expectations.

The freshman at Pasadena City College has three years' Reserve duty under her belt.

"I'm very happy I made this decision. I expected a lot out of the Army, and now

the Army expects a lot from me. I like that; I like the pressure," Mercado said.

The Rosemead, Calif., high school graduate joined the Reserve in November of her senior year. She attended drill weekends, and underwent basic and advanced individual training after graduation.

A writer for her high school newspaper, Mercado said she has always been interested in journalism and knew at a young age that broadcasting would become her niche.

"I want to meet a lot of people; I want to see how others live, how we're different, but how we're alike," she said.

"I don't know if I'm lucky, but my time in the Army has so far been wonderful, and I've always had positive people around me," she said. "The Army is just like anything else: You have to make it work for you. Anything you do, whether it's the military or college, you have to make it work for you."

"I don't just want to be a poster girl," she said. "I want to gain experience, to deploy and be able to tell others when I'm in the field: 'I've been there, you can learn something from me.'"

Mercado recently returned from a six-month deployment in Kosovo with the 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, her Reserve unit's sister unit. — *Julia Bobick, U.S. Army Recruiting Command Public Affairs Office*



Mercado: USAR poster girl.



Steve Harding

Mann: Soldier and actor.

He enlisted in 2000, and after basic training and OCS elected to become a military intelligence officer.

"Good intelligence is vital to any Army, and it's

an area in which I think my academic background can really be of value," Mann said. "And intelligence work is interesting; there's always something going on."

The same can be said of Mann's civilian career. In addition to his work in front of the camera he has written a screenplay and two books: "The Theatrical Juggernaut," a guide to the artistic and business aspects of acting as a profession, and "To Benning and Back: The Making of a Citizen Soldier." And he has also put his business training to work, having founded Unstoppable Actors, a New York-based consulting firm that deals with both the artistic and business aspects of acting.

Despite his burgeoning show-business success, Mann said his military career is equally important.

"I love everything about acting, and I think entertaining people is a wonderful service to be able to provide," Mann said. "But I also feel that I need to give something back to my country, and being a soldier really answers that need." — *Steve Harding*

SOLDIERS of the **U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit** and actor Clint Eastwood participated in a recent History Channel special broadcast about the Magnum handgun.

Viewers were urged to join the History Channel "for a review of the history of the biggest, baddest gun available today — unlimited firepower

USAMU soldiers: History Channel debut.

at the pull of a trigger!"

USAMU soldiers, filmed months earlier by a California-based production company crew that traveled to Fort Benning, Ga., appeared at the beginning and near the end of the broadcast.

Producer Tom Jennings and his crew interviewed USAMU soldiers and civilians for the show. They visited USAMU ranges to film members of the Service Rifle Team shooting the Magnum and interviewed USAMU ammunition technicians while they were producing special Magnum bullets. They also spoke with USAMU gunsmiths, who build the Magnums for the Army shooters.

"I think everything went well," said USAMU Service Rifle Coach Donnie Heuman. "The crew members were very excited about being around the guns and actually being able to film a bullet going down range; they thought that was pretty cool."

"I found it fascinating to be standing under the targets while the shooters were 'punching' holes in them from 600 yards," said Jennings. "That's not an everyday experience for a civilian."

Formed in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to raise the standards of marksmanship throughout the U.S. Army, the AMU has been a part of the U. S. Army Recruiting Command since October 1999. — *Paula J. Randall-Pagán, USAMU PAO*

USAMU soldiers appeared at the beginning and near the end of the broadcast.

